



Agenda Item Number: 2006-2-8C

BERNALILLO COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Meeting Date: February 28, 2006

Department: Fire and Rescue **Staff Contact:** Don Scott, Deputy Chief
John Dantis, Deputy County Manager

TITLE: 2006 Wildfire Season – State of Readiness

ACTION: Motion to approve Administrative Resolution AR -2006 establishing a state of readiness for 2006 wildfire events in Bernalillo County.

SUMMARY:

Upon review of the severe drought conditions that currently exist as evidenced by the following information provided by the State Forestry Department. The Bernalillo County Office of Emergency Management, Bernalillo County Fire Department and Bernalillo County Fire Marshal's Office are recommending a "State of Readiness" for the preparation of a severe wildfire season.

- **Weather Trends** are based on information from the Albuquerque Office of the National Weather Service and Albuquerque Zone Fire Weather Forecasts. Moisture has been spotty over most of New Mexico throughout the winter. Winds are expected to continue and there is little chance of measurable precipitation. **UPWARD TREND**
- **1000 Hour fuel moisture levels** are at 10% or below and with the lack of precipitation are fast approaching the 90th percentile. The 1000 hour fuels are greater than 3 inch diameter fuels which take the longest to dry out. 10% fuel moisture is an indicator that the larger diameter vegetation is below the average for the area this time of the year and the trend is that they will continue to get drier with the current forecast. **UPWARD TREND**
- **Live vegetation moisture** samples taken from forest grasses, brush and trees are indicating that the vegetation is showing a drying trend increasing the chance for large fire development. **UPWARD TREND**
- **Dead Fuel Moisture** samples measured from locations across the Forest are indicating that the fuels are showing a drying trend increasing susceptibility to ignition. **UPWARD TREND**

The Office of Emergency Management requests the Board's approval of the following actions in an effort to create a "State of Readiness" to mitigate and respond to wildfire activity in Bernalillo County. Such actions are:

- Prevention by working with homeowners and businesses to establish defensible spaces, brush thinning, and preparation of property for a wildfire event.
- Community Education by continuing to hold public informational meetings and trainings on the threat of wildfire and the public's role in a wildfire event.

- Continued support of the Community Wildfire Prevention and Protection (CWPP) program.
- Further development of the Firewise program in the East Mountains.
- Use of the Citizens Addressing Response Enhancement (CARE) program.
- Response
 - Review and credentialing for wildland firefighters.
 - Firefighting equipment maintenance and readiness.
 - Patrol of the Bosque by the Sheriff's Department.
 - Ensure adequate staffing as necessary for public safety response throughout the wildfire season.
- Emergency Management
 - Support operations of the Office of Emergency Management
 - Continue to provide training and coordination of county departments throughout the wildfire season.
 - Support statewide efforts in Emergency Management operations during wildfire events.

Staff requests Board approval of the proposed Administrative Resolution establishing a "State of Readiness" for wildfire events in Bernalillo County.

ATTACHMENT:

1. Administrative Resolution AR -2006

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

STAFF ANALYSIS SUMMARY

COUNTY MANAGER

DEPUTY COUNTY MANAGER FOR PUBLIC SAFETY

All objective fire danger indicators for both the South Valley and East Mountain Areas are pointing to high to severe fire conditions. In recognition of these indicators, it is prudent and proactive for Bernalillo County to do everything in its power to "make ready" this community in the event of a major event. I respectfully request Board approval of this Administrative Resolution. J Dantis 2/24/06

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